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Donovan Flies Into Havana For Negotiations on Prisoners

HAVANA, Aug. 30 (UPI) — James B. Donovan, the New York attorney who hopes to obtain the release of 1113 Cuban invasion prisoners, arrived today to open negotiations. Premier Fidel Castro did not send anyone to the airport to welcome him.

Only security police and the liaison representative of the Cuban Prisoners' Families Committee, Mrs. Berta Barreto, were on hand when the American lawyer landed after a flight from Miami.

Whether Donovan will have the opportunity to deal directly with Castro is uncertain.

Castro has set a ransom price tag on each of the 1113 prisoners here and 60 others permitted to go to the United States last April for medical treatment.

The individual fines range from \$25,000 to \$500,000. Only six of the 1179 prisoners put up for ransom have had their indemnity paid and been released unconditionally so far.

Castro fixed the collective ransom for all prisoners at \$62 million.

A total of 1184 prisoners were taken in the abortive April 1961 invasion. Five of them were executed by firing squads.

Donovan was accompanied by Alvaro Sanchez Jr., chairman of the Cuban Families Committee in the United States, and Ernesto Freyre, committee secretary. Both Sanchez and Freyre have sons among the prisoners.

Donovan, who negotiated with the Soviet Union for the exchange of U-2 pilot Francis

Gary Powers for Soviet spy Col. Rudolf I. Abel, came here with the consent of the Cuban Government and with the approval of the American State Department. There was no indication how long he would stay.

Prior to Donovan's arrival, the Cuban Government disclosed that it has frozen wages and imposed severe penalties on absenteeism in an effort to increase production.

A decree, issued by Labor Minister Augusto Martinez, said most future wage increases must be approved by the Government.

An exception was made in the case of promotions. An employee who is promoted may be granted a "provisional" wage increase.